Rock Climbing
in the Ongoye
Forest Reserve

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Rock Climbing in the Ongoye Forest Reserve

Gavin Peckham

November 2017

(Minor updates: December 2019)

Cover Photo: Dario Tedeschi on Karma Chameleon

General views across the Ongoye.
Photos: Anthony van Tonder

DISCLAIMER

Rock climbing is a dangerous sport in which you can be seriously injured or even killed.

This guide is intended only for the use of experienced climbers who have the necessary expertise, experience and judgement to ensure their own safety.

Whilst I have made a reasonable effort to ensure the accuracy of the information in this guide, you make use of it entirely at your own risk.

This information will obviously become outdated as time passes so climbers are personally responsible for ascertaining the situation and conditions prevailing at the time

UPDATES

Updated info may be posted on the MCSA-KZN web site that is currently hosted at: https://www.mcsakzn.co.za

NEW ROUTE INFORMATION

Suggestions or new route information may be sent to: gavin.peckham@gmail.com

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Ongoye Forest Reserve

How To Get There

Main roads – not to scale.

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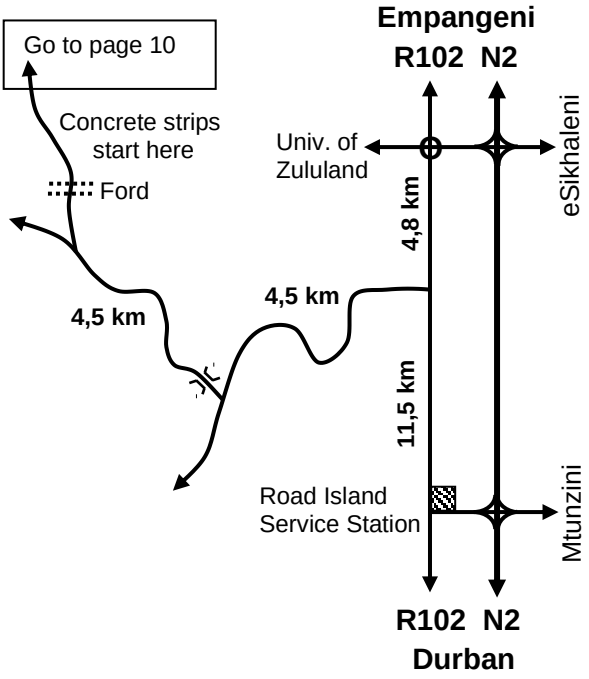


General Information

The Ongoye Hills are located about 150 km north of Durban. They are about 15 km inland and run parallel to the coast between Eshowe and Empangeni. The Ongoye Forest Reserve is about 4 000 hectares in extent and includes the remnants of a once extensive coastal forest as well as rolling grasslands with rocky outcrops. There are superb views out over the coastal plains and across to the Indian Ocean as well as inland views over the historic Nkwaleni Valley. The Zulu king, Mpande, is the first person known to have afforded protection to Ongoye Forest in the 1800s. Commercial logging occurred in the forest between 1909 and 1924. The area became an official conser-vation area in 1992. The reserve is an easily accessible nature lover's paradise and, as a bonus, has some interesting climbing on granite boulders and slabs.

How To Get There

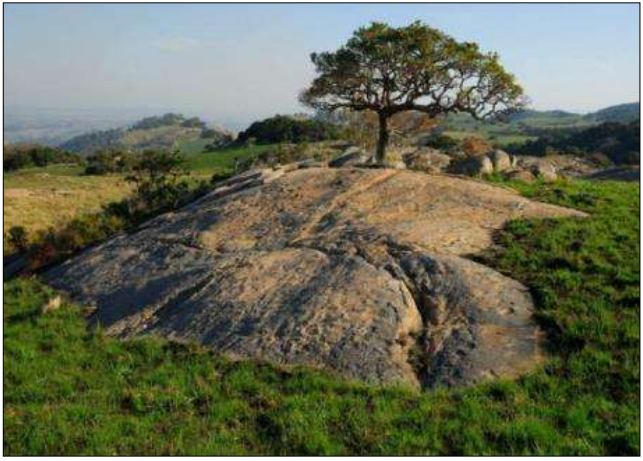
Take the N2 Toll Road north from Durban. About 150 km north of Durban take the off-ramp at the Mtunzini Toll Plaza. At the top of the off-ramp turn left - turning right takes you to the village of Mtunzini where you can buy any last minute provisions. About 1 km from the off ramp there is a T-junction at the Road Island Service Station where you turn right onto the R102. From this T-junction head north for about 11,5 km until you see a large marula tree and a petrol station on your left. Immediately before these turn left onto the P525 (-28.8870 ; 31.8159). This turn off, and the next two, are

(currently) marked by large "Ongoye Forest Birder's Camp" signs. These rough dirt roads are used by taxis, pedestrians and domestic animals – proceed with caution! Follow the main dirt road and after 4,5 km turn right (-28.8829 ; 31.7772) onto the D1554 and immediately cross a bridge over a small stream. About 4,3 km along this rough and winding dirt road you will see a rural school up on your left. About 200 m after the last school buildings, and about 4,5 km from the previous fork, turn off (-28.8634 ; 31.7445) diagonally to the right onto a narrow track.
After about 100 m this track fords a shallow stream. The water level in this ford is usually very shallow but rises and falls very rapidly after any rain. About 50 m after the ford there is a pair of concrete strips. The short section between the ford and the strips is usually very rough. Continue carefully along the concrete strips, praying that you do not meet a vehicle coming in the opposite direction. The concrete strips wind up through the forest and end in grasslands at the top of the hills.

At the end of the concrete strips, turn right and follow the track with a high "middle-mannetjie" through open grassland for about another kilometre until you see some buildings ahead. The offices are in the tree-lined enclosure on the left. It is usual to park here if you plan to climb or, to park at the old birder's hut if you plan to go bird watching.

Vehicle Requirements

The concrete strips allow "normal" sedan cars to reach the Reserve relatively easily **provided** that they are not heavily laden with passengers and equipment and **provided** that they are driven slowly and carefully with a modicum of skill and intelligence. A pick-up or other high clearance vehicle will have no trouble getting there but will be limited in the areas they could access within the reserve. A 4WD would cruise up and give access to the 4 x 4 track that runs the length of the reserve – this also provides access for some interesting hiking and mountain biking routes.



View across the Ongoye. Photo: Anthony van Tonder

Ongoye Forest Reserve

Location of Climbing Areas

Rough sketch - not to scale !

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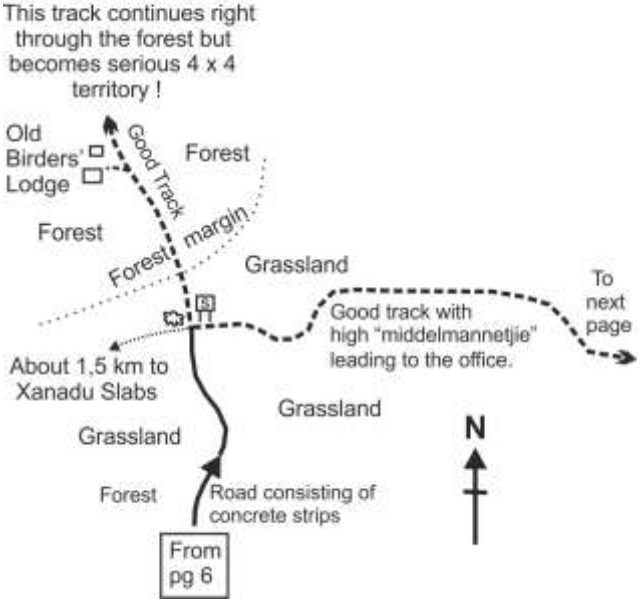

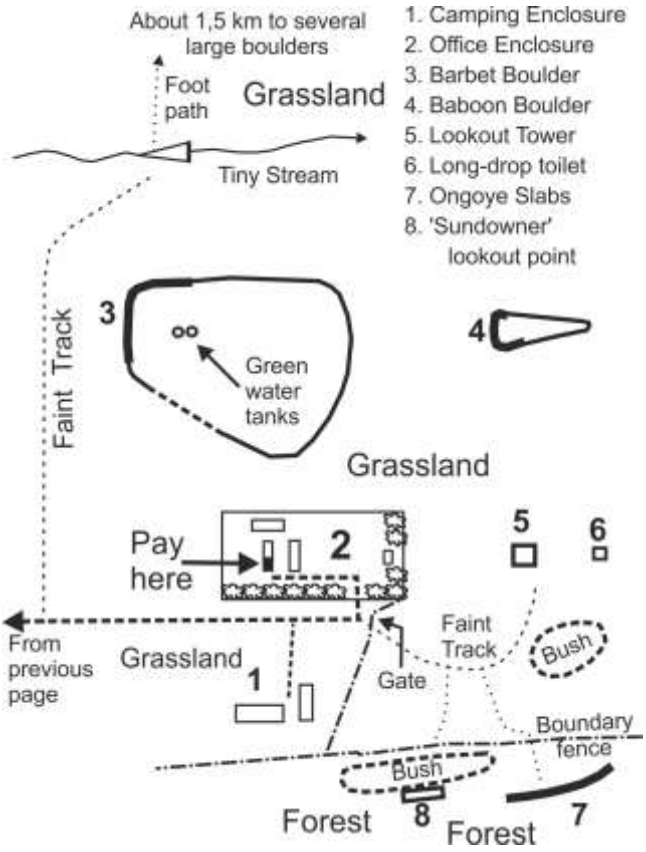

If you prefer a "to scale" version, then a Google Earth image of the area will be found on the following page.

1. Concrete strips
2. End of concrete strips
3. Old birder's hut
4. Office area
5. Barbet Boulder
6. Baboon Boulder
7. Ongoye Slabs
Google Earth

Entry Fee / Community Levy

Until recently visitors were required to pay a community levy of R10 per person per day. Other than the daily levy, there were no other costs, not even for camping over-night. However, recently (Oct 2019), they seem to have stopped collecting levies or requiring people to sign in. Due to "changes in the management structure", people may now apparently come and go as they please.

Accommodation

(A) Mtunzini

Currently**,** the best option is undoubtedly to stay at any of the wide variety of facilities available in the delightful coastal resort village of Mtunzini or the adjacent Umlalazi nature reserve. A Google search will reveal a plethora of options. The resort also offers a wide variety of attractions for non-climbing members of your party. From Mtunzini it is just a 30 minute drive to Ongoye.

(B) Camping

The "official" camping area near the office has no trees for shade. The ablution block was abandoned before completion and is totally non**-**functional. It is necessary to bring **everything** you need with you, especially water. There is currently nowhere to bath except for some tiny forest streams. These carry good populations of indigenous minnows and much else besides – NO SOAP PLEASE! Eco-friendly bush-toilet methods are required. Should you be unfamiliar with these please

treat yourself to a copy of Kathleen Meyer's classic book, "How to Shit in the Woods".

The officers do not seem to mind if you ask permission to pitch your tents in the more sheltered area under the casuarina trees near the office block. If "living close to nature" doesn't suit you, then revert to option (A).

(C) The Birder's Lodge

The idyllic birders' lodge located at a lovely spot just within the forest, and easily accessible by normal vehicles, has fallen into disrepair due, inter alia, to the "change in management structure". The excellent bird guiding service that was once available has, sadly, like all these once functioning facilities, fallen into a state of disrepair.

Activities

Apart from rock climbing you can go hiking, mountain biking, bird watching and star gazing at night. The variety of plant life is amazing and the venue provides a wide variety of subjects for photographers. This is an ideal venue to just "get away from it all" and do absolutely nothing for an idyllic and relaxing weekend!

Security

There are currently no significant security risks. The local population has right of access to the Reserve. They frequently walk through the Reserve and routinely graze their cattle within it. Lock your valuables away out of sight in the boot of your car and keep a sharp eye on your possessions if the local youngsters turn up to watch your activities at the Barbet Boulder. Pilfering is rare but it is unfair to put temptation under the noses of these impoverished rural people so please exercise caution where necessary.

A major "through-path" runs along the track leading past the Barbet Boulder but the Baboon Boulder and Ongoye Slabs are far from any passing traffic and are completely safe from any possible pilfering. Baboons, vervet and samango monkeys patrol the area so it is best to pack all food away securely.

Security Update: Some time ago a visitor had R30 000 damage done to his brand new Land Rover by – wait for it – Ground Hornbills !!! They savagely attacked their reflections in the panels of the vehicle and left almost no part of the vehicle undamaged. His insurance did eventually pay, so please be aware of this remote but expensive possibility – although, it is quite an honour to have your vehicle panel beaten by this rare and intriguing species.

Cell Phone Reception

There is marginal cell phone reception in most areas 'though you might have to move around a bit to pick up a signal.

Flora and Fauna

Spectacular, panoramic views, walks though pristine forest and beautiful, park-like uplands provide the backdrop for the Ongoye "specials". These include the endemic Green Barbet, the Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon, the Ongoye Red Squirrel and the Zululand Dwarf Chameleon. Apart from these, other rare species such as the Ground Hornbill, Green Twinspot, Orange and Yellow Throated Longclaws, Narina Trogon, Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher, Samango monkeys, blue duiker, thick-tailed bush baby, forest green butterfly are also spotted here. Because of the mixture of forest, grassland and rocky outcrops, the flora is extremely diverse. The only known specimen of the cycad, Encephalartos woodii, was found here in 1895.

Alien Invaders

Please pull up any chromolaena, bug weed, lantana or other alien invaders that you may see growing near the boulders.

Left: Green Barbet
Above: Red Squirrel
Below: Ground Hornbill

Nature / Birding Guides

The main attractions of the reserve are probably the Green Barbet and the Ongoye Red Squirrel. To virtually guarantee a good view of these and other species, it is possible to hire local guides who are extremely proficient. They must be booked in advance via the contact details on the Zululand Birding Route web site. **UPDATE:** Sadly, this service, like much else, has also now fallen into disuse.

Climbing

The climbing is on granite boulders and slabs and is totally different from the usual sandstone crags that are so familiar to KZN climbers. There are two climbable boulders close to the office and a granite slab on the escarpment facing the sea. In summer you can follow the shade and avoid the Zululand heat by climbing on the Barbet and Baboon Boulders in the morning and then moving across to the Ongoye slabs in the afternoon.

There are currently about 30 routes in grades between 9 and 17. They range in length from 5 m to 30 m. Because there is no significant gear, most of the routes have been bolted. It is difficult to grade routes on this type of rock so please treat the stated grades as a very rough guide only. In the RDs, **B** = bolts and **C** = chains **OR** anchor bolts. Frictioning up these granite slabs makes you acutely aware of your feet and your balance and dramatically focuses your attention on these aspects of

your climbing technique. Hand holds generally consist of hooking a finger nail behind a tiny crystal! Falling can be a painful, cheese-grating but non-fatal experience!

There is a lot of potential for new routes and bouldering in the area. The Ongoye is a beautiful, secluded and little visited wilderness area. So if you want to tick off the endemic Green Barbet, the Ongoye Red Squirrel and some pleasant routes on granite, all in one trip, then this is the **only** place you can do it!

Please note this observation of Anthony van Tonder, a 20+ climber, "Surprisingly, the climbing is a lot trickier than the grades would indicate!" So please do not be put off from visiting this magic area by the apparently easy grades! This is an interesting venue both from an environmental and from a climbing point of view.

Lowering-Off on the Barbet Boulder

Weighting your rope by lowering a climber off this rough, easy angled boulder can cause a lot of rope drag, wear and tear and even serious damage to your ropes. So after leading or seconding a route it may be better **not** to lower off. Either walk off or pull up sufficient rope and then abseil back down the doubled rope. On many routes it is practical to top rope from a bolt at the top of the steeper part of the climb, but below the final bolts on the rounded summit – use your common sense – it's your rope!

Bolting

Permission was obtained from the relevant authorities to bolt the **existing** routes on condition that a "minimum visibility" approach was adopted. The bolts may be difficult to spot because the first bolts tend to be high up and some have been painted a matt brown or grey. Permission to bolt any new routes should be obtained from the controlling authorities. This is unlikely to be refused as long as bolting activities do not affect the wilderness atmosphere.

Update: In the present circumstances, I doubt that you will find anybody in a position to give permission, or anybody who cares one iota whether you bolt or not.

Financial contributions towards the initial bolting costs have been received from: Bruce Tomalin, Carl Fatti, Ian Cox, John Sargood and the MCSA-KZN

New Route Potential

Three areas have been developed so far:
(A) Barbet Boulder - 16 routes.
(B) Baboon Boulder - 3 routes.
(C) Ongoye Slabs - 10 routes.

There is some potential for further routes in these areas, but there are also numerous undeveloped boulders and slabs scattered around the reserve that await the attention of enthusiastic and adventurous climbers.

ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

A. Barbet Boulder

This is the big boulder that is highly visible on your left as you drive towards the offices and campsite. There is a vague track through the grass that leads past a clump of trees near the base of the boulder.

It is easy to walk off (or up) the back of the boulder from its seaward side. The boulder was not named after the famous Green Barbet, but after the Black Collared Barbets that were calling from the bush at the bottom of the crag when Richard Knott and I first climbed there in 1998.

The first ten routes are on the west face of the boulder and the last six routes are on the north face. These last six easy routes lead up to top anchors near the top of the slab but have not yet been bolted.

To reach the anchors for the routes on the north face, walk up to the top of the boulder. As you approach the water tanks with the summit bulge on your left, keep walking straight on between the tanks and the summit bulge. Carry on walking to a point about 10 m past the tanks. On your right there is a large block with two bolts on top. From here you can abseil down to and / or top rope 'Albizia' or any adjacent line that tickles your fancy. You must abseil through an obvious gap in the vegetation to reach the clean rock below and then

continue to the base of the crag. A doubled **60 m rope** will only just reach the bottom – be careful !

To reach the anchors for Eeny, Meany, Miny and Mo proceed as indicated above but after passing the water tanks tend left and walk over two narrow 'strips' of low vegetation to reach the anchors at the top of the clean slab below. With a little care these anchors can be safely approached from above but exercise caution as a slip could lead to a continued and accelerating descent, otherwise known as a plummet !

A 20 m ab from these bolts leads to the ledge below. If you are not happy soloing these easy, pleasant lines, then you can easily top rope them using the anchors described above. The Barbet Boulder gets morning shade and afternoon sun.

The Routes

The following routes on the west face are listed from right to left. The first two routes start about 9 m to the right of the huge curving recess in the middle of the west face at a faint double groove in the rock adjacent to boulder "A" (see Plan View). Follow this faint groove up to a left tending vegetated groove with a clump of bush at either end. Above this vegetated groove the slope of the rock increases significantly.

Ongoye Forest Reserve

Barbet Boulder (Plan View)

Rough sketch - not to scale !

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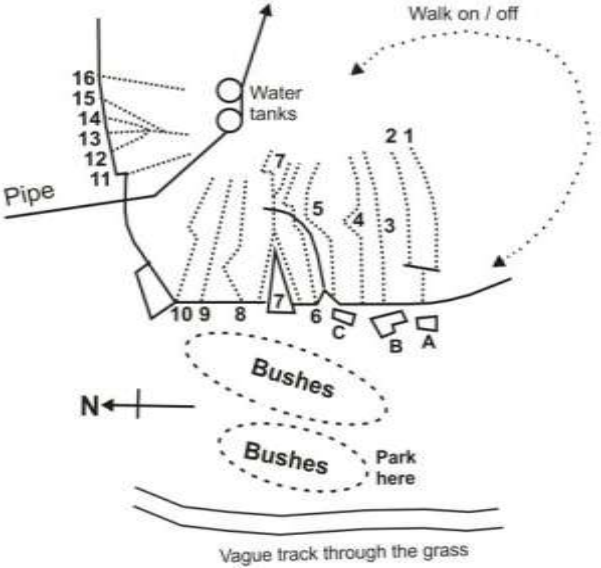

Routes

1. Pussyfoot (14)
2. Black Eyed Suzi (11)
3. Last Gasp (12)
4. Dogma (12)
5. Tarzan (16)
6. Gecko (17)
7. Flakey (12)
8. Eish! (14)
9. Karma Chameleon (16)
10. Get Knotted (13)
11. Khona Lapha (12)
12. Mo (9)
13. Miny (9)
14. Meany (13)
15. Eeny (11)
16. Albizia (10)

1. Pussyfoot (14) [8B] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 April 2007)
From the right hand end of the vegetated groove (see bottom of page 21) climb straight up to a short, right tending groove. From the top of this groove follow the bolts to the top keeping strictly to the right of the big pockets on the following route. Interestingly smooth.

2. Black Eyed Suzi (11) [7B] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (04 April 2007)
From the left hand end of the vegetated groove (see bottom of page 21) climb straight up to a large pocket. Climb straight up through the next two big pockets and then up past a perched flake. Continue easily to the top.

3. Last Gasp (12) [6B] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (31 August 2012)
Start 3 m to the left of the previous two routes and directly in front of boulder "B" (see Plan View). Follow a faint black / brown water streak and associated grooves straight up to a large pocket at the start of steeper rock. Climb up to reach a short vertical groove then continue up a short, steep, narrow ridge with a pocket of vegetation on its right to reach a comfortable stance. Pull through the bulge above and continue easily to the top. At the bulge, avoid using the pockets on the two adjacent routes.

Ongoye Forest Reserve

Barbet Boulder- West Face

Rough sketch - not to scale !

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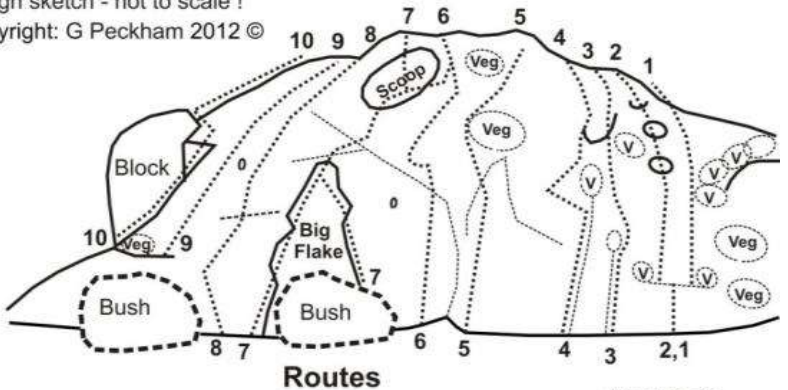


Routes

1. Pussyfoot (14)
2. Black Eyed Suzi (11)
3. Last Gasp (12)
4. Dogma (12)
5. Tarzan (16)
6. Gecko (17)
7. Flakey (12)
8. Eish! (14)
9. Karma Chameleon (16)
10. Get Knotted (13)

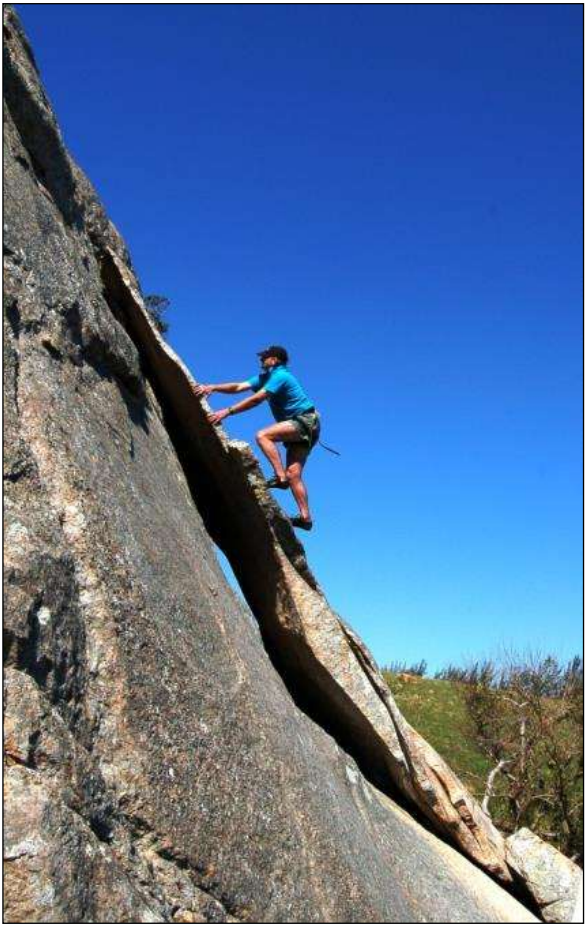
(**V** or **Veg** is vegetation)

4. Dogma (12) [6B] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (15 August 1998)
Start 1m to the left of 'Last Gasp' between boulders "B" and "C" (see Plan View). Follow a line of shallow grooves straight up to a clump of vegetation. From here move up diagonally left and then up diagonally right until it is possible to step across to the right into pockets (crux) and continue easily up to the top.

5. Tarzan (16) [6B] ***
FA: Anthony van Tonder (24 September 2008)
Start about 2 m to the right of the huge cleft in the middle of the face. Climb straight up onto a ledge with large bulge of rock on the left. Step up onto the bulge (crux). Move up and through a gap in the vegetation and then continue up the obvious ridge to the top.

6. Gecko (17) [6B] ***
FA: Anthony van Tonder (24 September 2008)
Start about 2 m to the left of the huge cleft in the middle of the face. Climb straight up to an overlap. Pull through into the scoop above. Step out left into a pocket (crux) then tiptoe delicately up the line of bolts.

7. Flakey (12) [7B] **
FA: Richard Knott & Gavin Peckham (15 Aug 1998)
Climb up either the left-hand (GP) or the right-hand (RK) edges of the huge flake. From the top of the flake surmount the bulging rock to enter a big scoop. Exit the scoop, either via the easy ridge on the right, or (preferably) near the back of the scoop on the left.



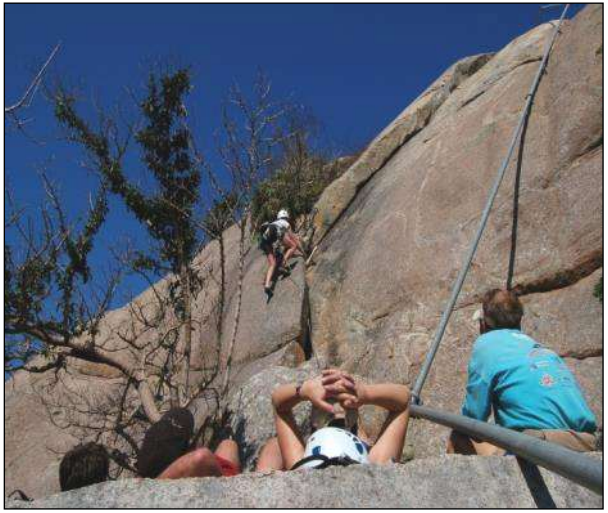
Gavin Peckham on 'Flakey'. Photo: Sally Hofmyer

8. Eish! (14) [6B] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 April 2007)
Start at the bottom of the slab just to the left of the Big Flake. Tiptoe diagonally up left towards the left-hand edge of a narrow overlap. Ease up through the overlap (crux) and then enjoy the easy ride up pockets and grooves. Avoid the exfoliating rock on the right.

9. Karma Chameleon (16) [7B] ***
FA: Gavin Peckham (15 August 1998)
Half way between the huge flake and the huge projecting block further left, there is a really neat route – a narrow groove of broken rock that runs straight up to the top of the boulder. Walk up a gentle slab to the start of a 2 m crack. Climb easily up the crack and then friction very delicately straight up the shallow groove to the top. This is an "interesting" line. Climbers generally adopt the position, style and speed of a chameleon as they inch upwards!

10. Get Knotted (13) *
FA: Gavin Raubenheimer & Gavin Peckham (28/3/2007)
To the left of the 'Karma Chameleon' groove there is a huge block sticking up out of the boulder. Walk up the gentle slab to the base of the block and then, like a rat up a drain pipe, grovel up the awkward corner on the right of the block. Pull through awkwardly onto the top of the block and then follow the gentle ridge to the top of the boulder. We had no trad gear, so GR used knotted slings for protection on the first ascent.

The next six routes start around the corner on the north face of the boulder.



Gapers on the Viewing Platform watching a climber on 'Khona Lapha' . Photo: Sally Hofmyer

11. Khona Lapha (12) [C] ***
FA: Gavin Peckham (01 June 2007)
About 5 m left of the pipe leading up to the water tanks there is a beautiful, right-facing corner that runs up to the top of the boulder. Start just to the left of the pipe. To reach the start of the main corner, either grovel up the short off-width or, more elegantly, layback up the block on the left of the off-with (see climber in photo).

Follow the perfect corner to the top. If it was longer and steeper it would be a real classic. Hope you appreciate the bilingual pun in the name!

At the base of the 'Khona Lapha' there is a large slab of rock. This forms a comfortable viewing platform from which to study the antics of the leader.

The next four routes all start from the same vegetated ledge. They share a single set of top anchors. The location and access to these anchors is described on pages 20 and 21. The ledge is at the same level as 'Khona Lapha' and starts just to the left of it. The final route, 'Albizia' starts just to the left of the ledge but several meters lower down.

12. Mo (9) [C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (22 April 2007)
Start about 5 m to the left of 'Khona Lapha' at a bonsai fig tree growing on the rock face about ½ a metre up off the ledge. Head up the slab keeping close to the vegetation on the right higher up.

13. Miny (9) [C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (22 April 2007)
Start about 3 m to the left of 'Mo' at a thin crack line and below a small flake about 3 m up. Use good edges to climb up past the flake and then continue easily up to the anchors.

Ongoye Forest Reserve

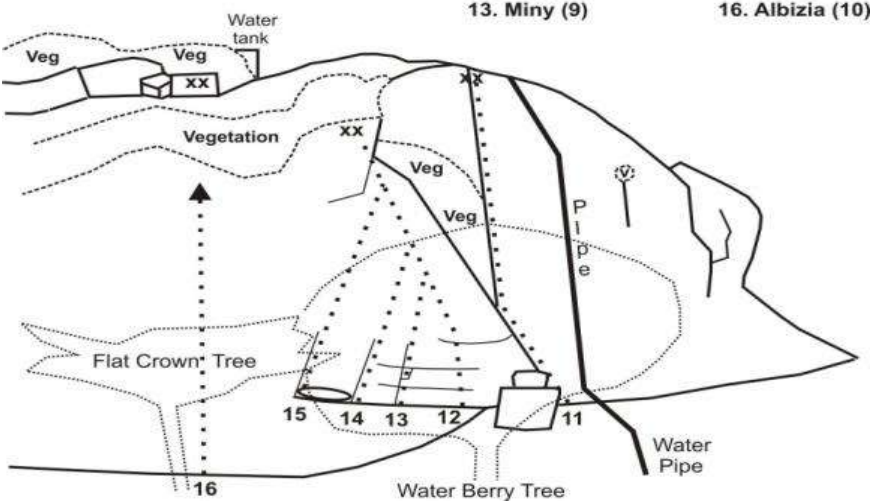
Barbet Boulder - North Face

Rough sketch - not to scale !

Copyright: G Peckham 2012 ©

Routes

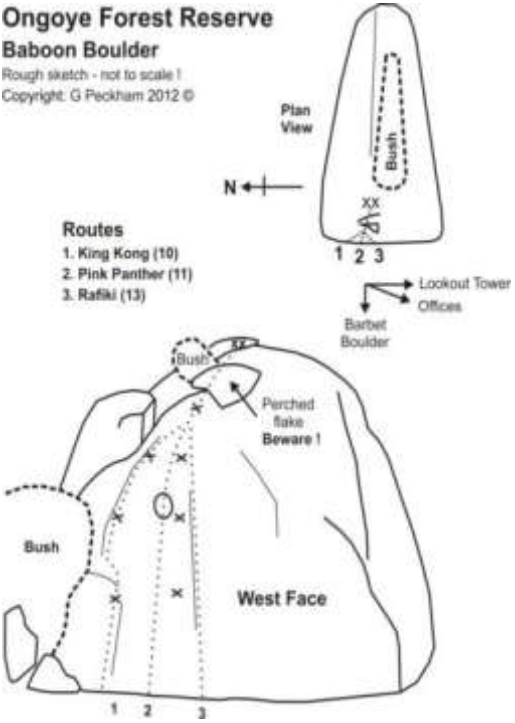
11. Khona Lapha (12) **14. Meany (13)**
12 Mo (9) **15. Eeny (11)**
13. Miny (9) **16. Albizia (10)**



14. Meany (13) [C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (22 April 2007)
Start about 3 m to the left of 'Miny'. Climb the thin, right-tending crack line and then continue easily up to the anchors. Called 'Meany' instead of 'Meeny' because it is quite 'mean' compared to the other routes on this ledge!

15. Eeny (11) [C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (22 April 2007)
Start about 4 m to the left of 'Meany' at the extreme left-hand end of the vegetated ledge where you can touch the top of the adjacent Flat Crown. ('Eeny' and 'Meany' start at opposite ends of a large, elongated boulder on the ledge.) Climb straight up a thin crack line and then continue up to the anchors on the block near the top of the boulder.

16. Albizia (10) [C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (22 April 2007)
Start about 20 m to the left of the pipe running up to the water tanks. At the base of the slab there is a Flat Crown tree on the left and a large Water Berry tree (Umdoni) on the right Start just to the right of the Flat Crown trunk. Head straight up the slab, passing to the left of a small clump of vegetation about 10 m up. There is a set of top anchors on a block at the top of the boulder – see details on pages 20 to 21. You will need a **60 m** rope to ab in or top-rope from these anchors.



B. Baboon Boulder

To get to this boulder walk north-east from the ranger's offices or east from the Barbet Boulder across a gentle valley. There are three routes on the west face and potential for some of new lines to the right of these.

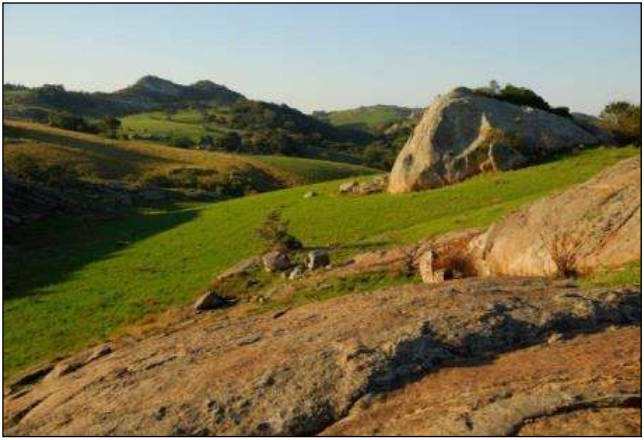
Beware of the big, perched flake at the top of these routes. I have tried my best to trundle it without any success, so I presume that it is safe, but treat it with caution.

**1. Crux in Crocs (11) ****FA: Hallam Payne (15 November 2014)
Climb the obvious short crack line that splits the small boulder just to the left of the main boulder.

2. King Kong (10) [4B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 April 2007)
Start at the left-hand side of the steep west face of the boulder. Climb a thin groove for about 3 m. Step to the left and carry on up a sort of vague arête. Shares the 4th bolt and the anchors with the next two routes.

3. Pink Panther (11) [4B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Start up a vague recess about one metre to the right of 'King Kong'. Climb straight up a broad and shallow groove to a large pocket. Climb straight up through the pocket to the anchors. The line of bolts is on the right of the route and is shared with the next route.

4. Rafiki (13) [4B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 April 2007)
Start one metre to the right of 'Pink Panther'. After a tricky start, climb straight up a thin groove and then continue up to the chains. The line of bolts is on the left of the route and is shared with the previous route.



Baboon Boulder, South Face. Photo: A van Tonder

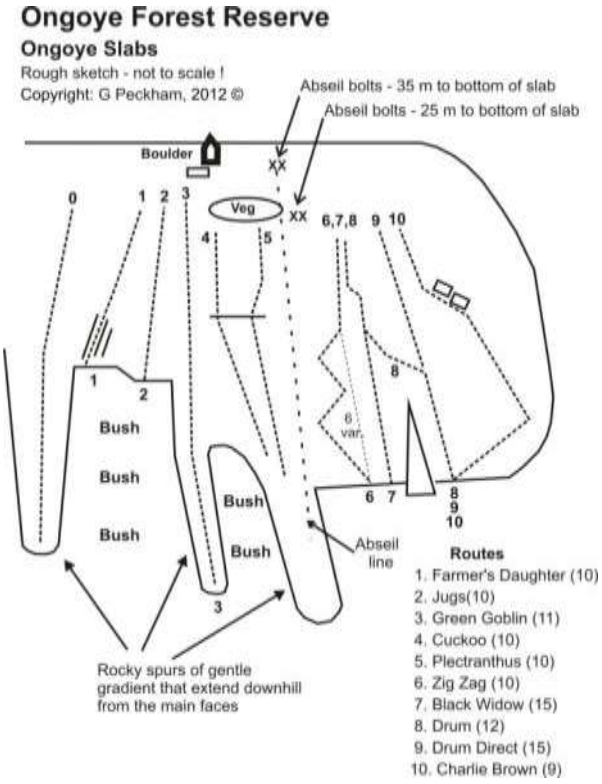
Baboon Boulder, West Face. Photo: Gavin Peckham

C. Ongoye Slabs – bring an abseil rope !

From the office area, head more or less due south, through a gate and along a vague path up the grassy knoll to the west (see sketch map on page 11). About ¾ of the way up the knoll there are some small, flat granite slabs in the grass on the left and a large clump of bushes about 30 m away to the right on the edge of the escarpment. From this point, walk towards the escarpment heading for a point just left (west) of the bush. Walk down a gentle grassy ramp next to the boundary fence. Near the bottom of the grassy ramp, climb under the boundary fence and walk towards the sea down some increasingly steep granite slabs for about 20 m or 30 m until you see a moderately sized boulder with a rounded point on its uphill side. There are two abseil bolts on the slab 5 m to the left of this boulder – as you look out towards the sea.

A 35+ m abseil from these bolts takes you to the bottom of the slab. Even a doubled 60 m rope will not reach the bottom. You must tie in a single rope or use a doubled rope from the two bolts located about 10 m below the first pair – see topo.

You can wander around all over this slab! If a route is too easy for your liking, you can straighten the line, keep to the left of the bolts, keep right of the bolts or just generally meander around taking any line that you find more interesting and challenging. This south facing slab gets morning sun and afternoon shade. Enjoy the fantastic view and the refreshing breeze!



There is a large flake leaning up against the base of the slab towards its right-hand side. The location of several routes is described relative to this flake. The routes are listed from left to right.

0. Long Line
There is a 40 m route to the left of 'Farmer's Daughter'. It is very easy at the bottom, then there is a short blank section followed by a steep slab before the angle eases off and continues up to a huge block at the top of the crag. Bolt it and open it and its yours !

1. Farmer's Daughter (10) [6B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Towards the left hand side of the slab there are three parallel, right facing cracks about 3 m long that tend up slightly to the right. Climb to the top of these cracks then continue up keeping to the left of the next route.

2. Jugs (10) **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Start at the base of the rock about 3 m to the right of the previous route and climb up shallow pockets to reach a broad, black water streak which is followed to the top.

3. Green Goblin (11) [9B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (23 March 2007)
Abseil straight down from the anchors on top of the block immediately below the abseil block. Continue down a long and very narrow spur of rock that leads down to about 40 m below the anchors. Climb straight back up to the anchors. If you are abbing on a doubled 60 m rope then you might as well stop at the bolt after 30 m, as the bottom 10 m is barely a scramble.

4. Cuckoo (10) [6B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (23 March 2007)
About 10 m left of the big flake at the base of the Ongoye Slab there is a rounded rocky spur that continues down the slope at a gentle angle. Walk up onto the crest of this spur. Climb up, tending slightly left along a vague black water streak, and heading for the left-hand end of a long, narrow overlap. Step up over the overlap and continue straight up the black water streak to the chains which are about 10 m below the Abseil Block.

5. Plectranthus (10) [6B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Start at the same place as 'Cuckoo'. Head straight up and step up over the right-hand end of the long, narrow overlap. Climb the left-hand groove of an inverted "Y" and then carry on straight up to the top keeping just to the left of a black water streak. The chains are located very close to the huge clump of vegetation below the abseil block.

6. Zig Zag (10) [7B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Start about 3 m to the left of the big flake at the base of the slab and about 2 m to the left of a prominent black water streak. Climb up diagonally left along a line of small pockets for about 3 m to a recess. Follow the recess up diagonally right for 2 m. Climb up diagonally left to another recess. From this recess move up

diagonally right towards a black water streak. The water streak runs just to the left of a large clump of aloes that is on the sky line when viewed from the start of the route. Continue up near the black water streak to the top. A set of chains is located about 3/4 of the way up to facilitate top-roping. **Update:** Beware they may be rusty.

Variation: Zig Zag Direct (12)
FA: Dylan Salt and Dario Tedeschi (24 March 2007)
Ignore the easy zig-zag line and climb straight up the line of the bolts.

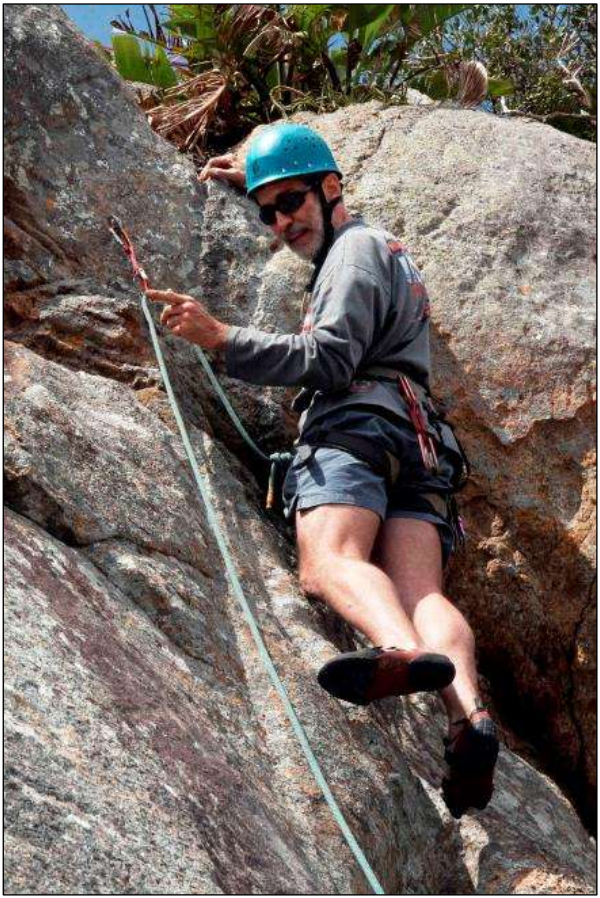
7. Black Widow (15) [7B; C] ***
FA: Dylan Salt and Dario Tedeschi (18 August 2007)
Start 1 m left of the big flake and climb straight up the prominent black water streak. The top two thirds of this route coincide with the original line of 'Drum'.

8. Drum (13) [7B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Start about 3 m to the right of the base of the big flake. Head up diagonally left to reach a 2 m vertical recess that is about 5 m above the tip of the flake. Just before reaching this recess you pass left across the base of a slight bulge of rock that resonates like a drum when you pat it. From the top of the recess, friction delicately up a black water streak (crux) or up the adjacent face for 3 m to reach a small ledge with an aloe. Continue up the black water streak using the flake / crack on the right to reach the large clump of aloes mentioned in the previous RD. Follow the black water streak to the top – this last bit coincides with the top of 'Zig Zag'.

9. Drum Direct (15) [6B; C] **
FA: Gavin Peckham (24 March 2007)
Climb past the first two blots of 'Drum' and then continue on straight up to the top.

10. Charlie Brown (9) **
FA: Gavin Peckham (27 January 2007)
Start at the same point as 'Drum'. Climb a shallow groove diagonally right for about 4 m to where the rock meets grass. Head up the obvious, left-tending, narrow line of broken rock to the clump of vegetation. Climb diagonally left just below a couple of blocks, then up a short crack. Continue easily to the top.

If you have enjoyed climbing at the Ongoye Forest Reserve, then please tell others about the location and please come again !



Anthony van Tonder on the opening ascent of “Gecko”
Photo: Des Porter

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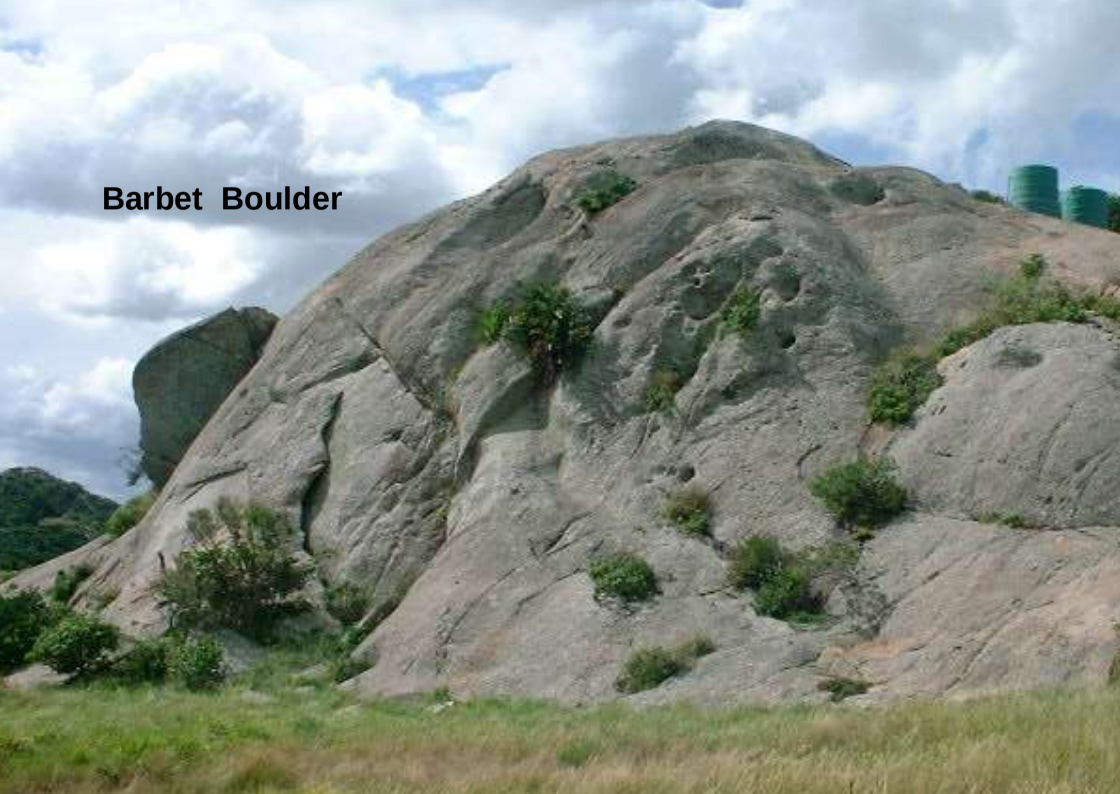
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